



# Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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[www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov)

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## IDNR Newsbits – April 2016

**NASP State Tournament:** Champions of the National Archery in the Schools Illinois State Tournament were Canton Ingersoll/Elementary Team #1 (Elementary School Div.), Champaign Jefferson Middle School Team #1 (Middle School Div.), and Danville Schlarman Academy (High School Div.). Topping the individual standings among females was Elena Johnson of Champaign Jefferson Middle School with an individual score of 286. Ben Hannauer of Champaign Centennial High School had the top individual score among males with 293. The NASP Illinois State Tournament, hosted by IDNR with more than 1,000 students participating, was held on April 2 at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield. Top finishers qualify for the NASP National Tournament on May 12-14 in Louisville, KY. For complete tournament results, check online:  
<http://www.nasptournaments.org/TournamentDetail.aspx?tid=1423>

**Youth Turkey Season:** Youth hunters bagged a preliminary total of 1,049 birds during the 2016 Illinois Spring Youth Wild Turkey Hunting Season. During the South Zone season on March 26-27, youth turkey harvest was 450, compared with 354 in 2015. The youth turkey harvest in the North Zone on April 2-3 was 599 turkeys, compared with 547 in 2015.

**Apply for Firearm/Muzzleloader Deer Permits:** Resident Illinois deer hunters can apply through April 30 for the first lottery drawings for 2016 Illinois Firearm and Muzzleloader-only Deer Season permits. Hunters can apply online through the IDNR website [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov). Application forms in PDF format are also available online at this link:  
<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Pages/ApplyForDeerOrTurkeyPermit.aspx>

The first lottery drawings for firearm and muzzleloader-only deer permits are for Illinois residents only. Resident hunters can apply in both the firearm and muzzleloader-only lotteries. The 2016 Illinois firearm deer seasons are Nov. 18-20 (first season) and Dec. 1-4 (second season). The 2016 muzzleloader-only permits may be used Dec. 9-11 (and in the second firearm season, Dec. 1-4).

**Get Your New License:** The new license year in Illinois has begun. Illinois fishing, hunting and sportsman's combination licenses and stamps for 2016 are available from DNR Direct license and permit vendors, online through the IDNR website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov) or by calling 1-888-6PERMIT (1-888-673-7648). The 2016 licenses and stamps are valid through March 31, 2017, unless otherwise noted.

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**Youth Hunting License:** A change in Illinois law for the 2016 Illinois license year allows any resident youth hunter age 18 and under (formerly 16 and under) to purchase a Youth Hunting License, which does not require the hunter to have a Hunter Education Card. A youth hunter with this license may hunt only while supervised by a parent, grandparent, or guardian who is 21 years of age or older and has a valid Illinois hunting license. The youth hunter shall not hunt nor carry a hunting device unless the youth is accompanied by and under close personal supervision of these individuals. 2016 Illinois licenses are available online or from IDNR license and permit vendors.

**Fishing Information Booklet:** The *2016 Illinois Fishing Information* guide is available in PDF format through the IDNR website in both English and Spanish versions at this link:

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/fishing/Pages/FishingInformation.aspx>.

Regulations in the guide are effective through March 31, 2017.

**Free Fishing Days:** Illinois Free Fishing Days for 2016 are June 17-20, during the Father's Day weekend.

**Hunter and Boating Safety Education Courses:** Check the schedule and register now for Hunter Safety Education and Boating Safety Education courses from the IDNR. Check the IDNR website for class dates and locations. The website link for all IDNR Safety Education course information is [www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety)

**Saluting Volunteer Hunter Safety Instructors:** The IDNR Safety Education program salutes Hunter Safety Instructors Art Schuetz of Highland, IL (Madison Co.), Lynn Hargus of Highland, IL (Madison Co.), and Ross McDowell of Havana, IL (Mason Co.). Each of them has served as a volunteer instructor in the program for 40 years. IDNR-certified volunteer instructors throughout the state – women and men like Art, Lynn and Ross – donate thousands of hours of their personal time offering safety courses to students in their communities. These dedicated individuals form the backbone of the Safety Education program. IDNR mandatory safety education courses are designed to teach user responsibility, respect and safety. For more information on Illinois Safety Education programs, courses, or to learn how to become a volunteer instructor, check the website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety)

**Turkey Hunting Safety Reminder:** Visitors to Illinois state parks, fish and wildlife areas, and other IDNR-managed sites with spring turkey hunting programs in April and May are reminded that hunting areas are closed to activities other than spring wild turkey hunting from one-half hour before sunrise until 1 p.m. daily during the spring turkey season. The hunting area safety restrictions apply to all visitors, including mushroom collectors. For turkey season dates, check the website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/turkey](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/turkey)

**Mushroom Collecting:** No license is required for mushroom collecting in Illinois, but mushroom collectors always need landowner permission and, on public sites, must adhere to approved collecting regulations and hours. Collection of mushrooms is allowed in many IDNR state parks, fish and wildlife, and other recreation areas, but it is prohibited in any area designated as a dedicated nature preserve. Areas under the jurisdiction of the IDNR that offer spring turkey hunting are not open to mushroom collecting until after 1 p.m. daily during turkey

season to ensure the safety of all site visitors. Mushroom collectors should call ahead to the IDNR site they intend to visit to learn of any site-specific regulations.

**Camping Reservations:** Make your reservations now for campsites and shelters for many IDNR sites for 2016. Reservations can be made online through the Reserve America website at [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com) using a Visa or MasterCard. For more information, check the IDNR website: <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/Landmgt/Programs/Camping/index.htm>

**Prairie State Hike App:** Visitors to Starved Rock State Park can take a guided hike on the park's most popular trails by using a new smartphone app – the Prairie State Hike App. It is available for 99¢ from iTunes or Google Play. Features of the app include a map, points of interest, audio for each stop, photographs and video. Hikes will be continually updated and new hikes added in the coming months will be available at no additional charge. The app was developed by the Prairie State Conservation Coalition, a non-profit organization created to assist conservation land trusts, land owners and communities in their efforts to protect land and water resources in Illinois. Hikes from other conservation organizations statewide also are available through the app. To find Starved Rock, open the app and choose Illinois Department of Natural Resources from among the conservation organizations listed.

**Check Your Boat Registration:** The IDNR reminds boat owners in Illinois to check their three-year boat registration/decal and renew their registration if it expires on June 30, 2016. Renewing watercraft registration can be done online through the IDNR website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov) or by phone by calling 1-866-867-3542. To renew registration, have available the watercraft's Illinois registration number, the first six characters of the watercraft's hull ID number, the first three letters of the registered owner's last name, and a credit card. For details on Illinois watercraft registration requirements and three-year boat registration fees, check the IDNR website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov/recreation/boating](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/recreation/boating).

Non-motorized watercraft, including canoes, kayaks, paddle boats, or sail boards in Illinois, are no longer required to be titled/registered in Illinois, unless the vessels have a motor or sail. Non-motorized watercraft owners are required to purchase an Illinois Water Usage Stamp for \$6.00 per calendar year (for each of their first three vessels, and \$3.00 each for any additional vessels). An agent fee of \$0.50 is charged per vessel. The 2016 Illinois Water Usage Stamp is valid through December 31, 2016. Water Usage Stamps are available over-the-counter from IDNR license and permit vendors. Find a vendor through the IDNR website at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/LPR/Pages/LicensePermitVendors.aspx>

**INPC Meeting:** The 223rd meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission will be held on Tuesday, May 3 beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the University of Illinois Extension Office, 901 Illinois Avenue, Waterloo, IL 62298. The meeting is open to the public. For more information, phone the INPC at 217-785-8686.